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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/074,449

02/13/2002

Edward T. LeBreton

32285

8968

116 7590 02/13/2007
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EXAMINER

STAIKOVICI, STEFAN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1732

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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3 MONTHS

02/13/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/074,449

Applicant(s)

LEBRETON ET AL.

Examiner

Stefan Staicovici

Art Unit

1732

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 January 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20,24-32,35-42,44 and 45 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20,24-32 and 38-42 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 35-36, 44-45 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 37 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. Applicants' amendment filed January 4, 2007 has been entered. Claims 1-20, 24-32, 35-42 and 44-45 are pending in the instant application.

Priority

2. Applicant's claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) is acknowledged.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 35-36 and 44-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wiltshire (US Patent No. 4,101,254) in view of Evans (US 2003/0054150 A1).

Wiltshire ('254) teaches the basic claimed process for making a hollow, fiber-reinforced composite article including, forming two end preforms and a central preform from glass fibers, assembling said preforms and positioning them in a cylindrical mold, inserting a flexible bag inside the preforms, inflating the bag to compress the preforms against the mold, impregnating the preforms with resin, further compressing the preforms to distribute the resin, curing the resin

and removing the inflatable bag to form the hollow, fiber-reinforced composite article (see col. 1, lines 10-24).

Regarding claims 35-36 and 44-45, Wiltshire ('254) does not teach a thermoplastic resin. However, the use of a thermoplastic resin to form a fiber-reinforced thermoplastic product is well known as evidenced by Evans (US 2003/0054150 A1) who teaches providing a thermoplastic resin onto glass fibers to form a preform and then molding the preform under heat and pressure to distribute the molten thermoplastic material (see ¶¶ 9-10, 27, 31 and 43). Therefore, it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the thermoplastic resin of Evans (US 2003/0054150 A1) to the performs in the process of Wiltshire ('254) in favor of the thermosetting resin because, Evans (US 2003/0054150 A1) specifically teaches that such thermoplastic material is an ideal replacement for thermosetting resin because it provides for reduced processing time, reduced porosity in the final product, hence providing for an improved process and resulting molded product.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 1-20, 24-32 and 38-42 are allowed.
6. Claim 37 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicants' arguments filed January 4, 2007 have been considered.

8. Applicants argue that "Wiltshire does not teach the use of any 'flexible, inflatable core' or any step of inflating in its disclosed inventive process" (see page 17 of the amendment filed 1/4/2007). It is noted that, "[a] reference may be relied upon for all that it would have reasonably suggested to one having ordinary skill the art, including nonpreferred embodiments." See MPEP §2123(I), citing, Merck & Co. v. Biocraft Laboratories, 874 F.2d 804, 10 USPQ2d 1843 (Fed. Cir.), cert. denied, 493 U.S. 975 (1989). In this case, in the background section presented in col. 1, lines 10-24, Wiltshire ('254) specifically teaches a process for making a hollow, fiber-reinforced composite article including inserting a flexible bag inside a preform formed of two end portions and a central, cylindrical portion and inflating the bag to compress the preform against the mold. Hence, it is submitted that, Wiltshire ('254) does teach the use of a "flexible, inflatable core" and a process step of inflating said "flexible inflatable core."

9. Applicants argue that "Wiltshire teaches away from the disclosed prior art process because the reference teaches that the use of the prior art mat sidewalls is a disadvantage." (see page 18 of the amendment filed 1/4/2007). However, when a reference merely shows a disadvantage is not enough to reject the teachings of the reference. Only if the teachings of the reference change the principles of operation of the prior art, then the teachings cannot be used to render the claims *prima facie* obvious. MPEP §2143.01(VI). Hence, "[d]isclosed examples and preferred embodiments do not constitute a teaching away from a broader disclosure or nonpreferred embodiments." See MPEP §2123(II), citing, In re Susi, 440 F.2d 442, 169 USPQ

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423 (CCPA 1971). Further, it is noted that, “[a] reference may be relied upon for all that it would have reasonably suggested to one having ordinary skill the art, including nonpreferred embodiments.” See MPEP §2123(I), citing, Merck & Co. v. Biocraft Laboratories, 874 F.2d 804, 10 USPQ2d 1843 (Fed. Cir.), cert. denied, 493 U.S. 975 (1989).

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Conclusion

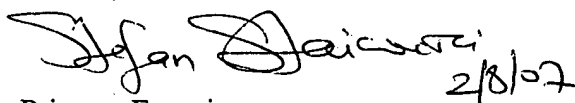
11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stefan Staicovici, Ph.D. whose telephone number is (571) 272-1208. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christina Johnson, can be reached on (571) 272-1176. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Stefan Staicovici, PhD


Primary Examiner

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February 8, 2007